

**California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley
Land Use, Housing and Agriculture Work Group
March 2006**

Scope of Work: (summary)

- Develop a macro concept plan, working with stakeholders and others, that integrates related parts of the system into a cohesive strategy for the region.
- Develop principles, guidelines and investment incentives
- Identify legislative and regulatory issues to be addressed for better outcomes
- Consider reorganization/consolidation to improve coordination and performance
- Provide better and more open access to spatial data and maps from public sources
- Coordinate regional and state agencies to improve effectiveness and efficiency

Mission: *To develop a regional consensus that identifies areas appropriate for social and economic development that will contribute to preserving important agricultural lands, sensitive natural resources and processes, and contributes to a sustainable quality of life for all residents in the region.*

The vision statement is based on values, expressed and implicit, that are taken from the Mission statement of the Partnership, and from the Growth Principles adopted by the Supervisor's Association.

Progress to Date:

The Work Group is building a strategy from the Principles for a Sustainable San Joaquin Valley (<http://www.greatvalley.org/sjpartnership/docs/SJVRACCGrowthPrinciples.pdf>) that were unanimously adopted by the San Joaquin Valley Supervisor's Association in October of 2005. The Land Use Work Group met three times. The initial small group is growing as more stakeholders hear about the effort and its importance to the region, and now includes citizen activists, representatives from local governments and state agencies, environmental organizations, agriculture, business and the building industry. Meeting times and places will be posted on the web site as they are scheduled. The next meeting during which the process and issues will be discussed will be with City and County Planning Directors on March 17th at the Great Valley Center. Public presentations will take place as staff time and resources allow.

Working on maps and models housed at the Information Center for the Environment, the Tech group has evaluated several models for urban development futures for the region, each of which is designed to prioritize shared regional values in a different way. The models have detailed projections for the build out of the region in 2025, 2040, and 2050: 1)at current rates and densities; 2)without building on any agricultural land, 3)with a focus on new towns and new cities, 4)with urban limit lines, 5) with more east west roads, and 6)with a focus on conservation of the land between I5 and 99. These preliminary discussions are the basis for a closer look at alternatives and more detailed analysis that will proceed in the coming weeks. The maps, population projections and other data will be available on the Great Valley Center website (www.greatvalley.org)

Three things have become clear in the discussions:

- There is not likely to be a single policy solution that will work in every area, so the final strategy for the region is likely to be a combination of strategies that can be applied as applicable and appropriate, and
- The population projections to 2025 can be reasonably handled in the region; the bigger challenges are between 2025 and 2040 when, according to the projections the population increases more dramatically, but the level of certainty decreases.
- Almost every part of the region has some value – wetlands, habitat, agriculture, steep slopes, etc, and so any decisions will require making tradeoffs, and requiring mitigation when truly important resources are lost or compromised.
- Recommended incentives are likely to be a combination of regulatory and financial solutions and proposals.

During the next month, a number of practitioners and experts will be evaluating the performance history and trends of commercial and residential development in the region, and others will be looking at the most important resource areas, and the potential for resource mitigation banks. The Tech Group and the Work Group are likely to meet again in April.

The goal of the work group is to develop a macro strategy for the region; moving the strategy to the counties is a different part of the challenge. Working together, the eight single county councils of government (COGs), and the Great Valley Center applied for and received a \$2M Blueprint Grant, (matched by \$500,000 from the Air Pollution Control District) to enable coordinated land use and transportation plans in each county that will be the basis for more fine grained work in each county and the implementation of the regional strategy. When complete, those local implementation plans will be re-aggregated into a regional plan that will become the basis for growth in the region, and will provide a rational and measured plan that will allow for housing and economic development and will also ensure a viable agricultural industry and minimize the negative impacts on air quality.

There is a high level of coordination and interface between the Partnership Land Use Effort and the San Joaquin Blueprint project, linked by the Staff of the Great Valley Center, and the participation of the COGs in the transportation and land use working groups.

One of the biggest challenges for this effort is reaching out broadly to engage the communities of the region. The mission of this project is to develop a “regional consensus” and that implies engaging in a regional conversation at some level. The Partnership and the Blueprint are trying to find funding and support for a communications program to reach out to communities more broadly and in a timely way.

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Great Valley Center, www.greatvalley.org

California Partnership, www.greatvalley.org/partnership/index.aspx

Or <http://www.bth.ca.gov/capartnership/sanjoaquinvalley.asp>